



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# International Migratory Bird Day

## *Education For Conservation*

### Migratory Bird Management

#### Mission

*To conserve migratory bird populations and their habitats for future generations, through careful monitoring and effective management.*



#### The Importance of Public Education

Public awareness and concern are crucial components of migratory bird conservation. Citizens enthusiastic about birds, informed about their threats, and empowered to become involved in addressing those threats can make a tremendous contribution to maintaining healthy bird populations. One of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's primary vehicles for public education is International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD).

#### Cause for Celebration

IMBD, held annually on the second Saturday in May, is an invitation to celebrate and support migratory bird conservation.

This year, hundreds of thousands of people will observe IMBD. They will gather in town squares, community centers, schools, parks, and refuges across the Western Hemisphere to learn more about wild birds, take action to conserve birds and their habitats, and simply have fun.

Like any day of recognition, IMBD exists to focus attention on a valuable resource — the nearly 350 species of migratory birds that travel between nesting habitats in North America and wintering grounds in South and Central America, Mexico, the Caribbean, and the southern U.S.

Migratory birds are some of the most beautiful, observable, and remarkable wildlife that share our

world. Many know migratory birds as symbolic harbingers of spring and melodious songsters of the woods. Migratory birds are also an important economic resource, controlling insect pests and generating billions in recreational dollars.

Unfortunately, research has shown that many migratory bird species are in decline, facing a growing number of threats on their migration routes and in both their summer and winter habitats. Thus, IMBD, in addition to being a day to foster appreciation, is a call to action.



*IMBD celebrates migratory birds such as the American Redstart that travel the Western Hemisphere.*

### A Partnership for Birds

IMBD is the hallmark outreach event for Partners in Flight (PIF), a unique, diverse consortium of individuals and groups who share a vision of healthy bird populations. Partners in this consortium include government agencies, conservation organizations, private businesses, academic institutions, chambers of commerce, and individual citizens.

The 1993 creation of IMBD is credited to a PIF member, the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. The principal responsibility for its national coordination currently rests with two other partners, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife's Division of Migratory Bird Management.

Since its creation, PIF has successfully developed research programs and management strategies to further bird conservation in addition to promoting outreach and education via IMBD and other activities.

### IMBD Today

The success of IMBD and other PIF programs stems from their positive, voluntary, grass-roots nature. A special day for migratory birds provides organizations, large and small, and individuals, young



*From simply watching a bird to hosting a full-scale festival, there are many ways to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day! credit: Robert Savannah*

and old, with an impetus to take part in an enjoyable activity to support migratory birds. Activities might be a bird walk, a lecture, a class, or a festival.

For those already involved in migratory bird conservation, IMBD adds momentum to the cause, raising local activities to the level of an international movement.

In addition, IMBD can provide celebrants with a focus in the form of an annual general theme. Themes have included the importance of wetland habitats, the effects homeowners have on bird conservation, the Peregrine Falcon and its celebrated removal from the Endangered Species List, the benefits of shade-grown coffee farms to birds, and Important Bird Areas.

Finally, although IMBD is officially a single-day observance, it is not limiting. Event planners are encouraged to schedule activities on the date or dates best suited to the presence of migrants in their area.

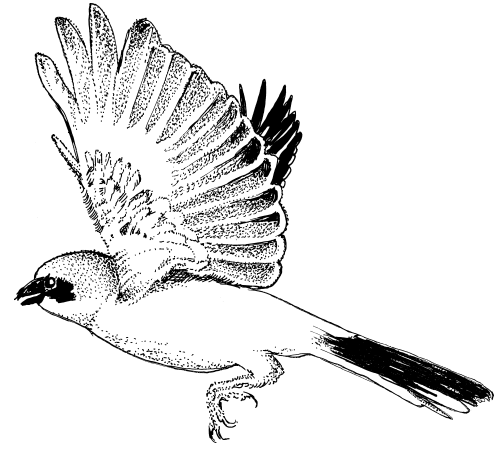
### IMBD Resources

IMBD has grown from a good idea to a significant, annual occurrence. Successes include:

*Growth in the number of annual IMBD events.* More than 500 public events, as well as countless club, classroom, and individual events, will take place this year.

*An expanding web presence.* At <http://birds.fws.gov/imbd>, one can find general IMBD information, IMBD ideas and links to an Events Registry and other relevant sites.

*Annual development of promotional and educational materials to help event organizers.* These include posters, t-shirts, educator packets, and resource directories. An on-line catalog can be found at <http://www.BirdDay.org>.



*Loggerhead Shrike  
credit: Robert Savannah*

*An Events Registry.* An on-line database that allows users to register their events or find out about other events.

*A Distance Learning Event.* A live, interactive IMBD program for grade-school students is broadcast from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center by satellite on the fourth Thursday in April.

\*\*\*

By kindling awareness and concern in hundreds of thousands of people, IMBD makes an important contribution to the conservation of migratory birds — some of nature's most magnificent resources.

**For More Information:**  
**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Division of Migratory Bird Management**  
**4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 634**  
**Arlington, VA 22203**  
**703 358 1714**  
<http://birds.fws.gov>

January 2002